

ANTI-VIVISECTION.

The passage of a bill that would have practically prevented animal experimentation within the state at the last meeting of the Legislature was a great shock to those who have been most interested in the development of medicine here in the last few years. The failure of the legislators representing the cities where there has been the greatest medical progress to understand or appreciate the value of their own medical institutions was also disturbing. The conference held before the governor of the State, which led to his veto of the bill, again emphasized the great ignorance on the part of the public as to medical questions. This ignorance exists also in the medical profession. Many physicians, even members of the Legislature, are not fully familiar with the requirements of medical investigation.

In order to prepare for the very evident danger from anti-vivisectionists and various other antis, to scientific growth in California, the Society for the Promotion of Medical Research was organized, its main purpose being to prevent legislation that would interfere with research on the one hand, and to stimulate research on the other. The whole plan of the society is to disseminate the truth in regard to medical research as widely as possible. It is of vital importance that the medical profession take a deep and personal interest in this matter. The attention of assemblymen and senators should be promptly called to legislation that in any way appertains to the subject. The society will be glad to co-operate in supplying information to physicians in regard to impending legislation.

It is proposed in the coming Legislature to meet the issue squarely as far as animal experimentation is concerned. The present laws in regard to cruelty to animals are very drastic and permit any abuse to be promptly corrected. Under these conditions it is thought that a law definitely arranging for animals from the pound to be used for experimental purposes is legitimate and most desirable and would be welcomed by the great majority of the people in the state. Dr. Whipple, of the Hooper Institute for Medical Research, has, with the aid of Judge Graupner and Dean Ophuls, carefully considered this whole problem and their conclusions can be relied upon by the medical profession. It is the hope of the society that every physician in California will take a personal interest in this matter at the present time. If it is settled right, it will have a profound influence for the future here and in other states. Although there have been many attempts made, no legislation has been passed in any one of the United States for the prevention of experimental work required for the advancement of medical science. California cannot afford to be sponsor for any such backward step and can be a leader in frankly meeting the needs of progressive medicine.

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ORIGINAL ARTICLES

SOCIAL INSURANCE.*

By MORTON RAYMOND GIBBONS, M. D.,
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To the Members of the Los Angeles County Medical Society:

Your officers have asked me to address you on the subject of "Medical Service under Social Insurance."

I will take some liberties with my subject. I propose to tell you of my impressions gained from observations in industrial accident work,—to make some comment upon the subject of "Health Insurance,"—and give an outline of a plan for medical service under Health Insurance, which I think would be practical.

I will commence with a discussion of the medical problems of the Industrial Accident Insurance Commission and the State Compensation Insurance Fund.

It will be apparent that the interests of the Industrial Accident Commission and the State Compensation Insurance Fund lie parallel to a large extent. The Commission feels that the Workmen's Compensation, Insurance and Safety Act places an obligation on it which is not specifically defined in the text of the law. That is, it feels responsible for the surgical results to the injured working man coming under its care. It feels that besides scrutinizing results from the standpoint of indemnities deserved, it should scrutinize them from the standpoint of good surgery and surgery which might have been accorded. If you have not already read the oration in surgery of Emmet Rixford, M. D., which is published in the Journal of the American Medical Association, September 30, 1916, you should do so. In this is set forth in a clear and farsighted way the effects of accident insurance on our profession.

The Industrial Accident Commission, when it began to administer the Workmen's Compensation, Insurance and Safety Act, found itself confronted with a problem which was comparatively unknown. There were few Commissions in this country. The laws in existence had less scope than the California law. No Commission had gone very far and all were pioneering. The foreign laws helped little because of differences in the basic principles of government. Our Commission had to make all the Rules of Procedure and establish its own precedents.

A parallel condition existed in the medical affairs of the Commission. Very few men in this country had ever been called upon to meet great responsibility in the question of trauma and its results. The books when they mentioned trauma at all *merely* "mentioned it." They did not give responsible information.

When the Workmen's Compensation, Insurance and Safety Act went into effect the Industrial Accident Commission gathered a group of medical

* This paper was read November 9, 1916, before the Los Angeles County Medical Society, and with slight modification, on November 21, 1916, at the hearing of the Social Insurance Commission held in San Francisco.